

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 2 and 5-7 are rejected. Claim 1 is herein amended. Claims 2 and 5-7 are herein cancelled without prejudice. New claims 8-15 are added herein. No new matter has been added.

Applicants' Response to Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Kuhn et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,634,401).

It is the position of the Office Action that Kuhn discloses the embodiment as claimed. Kuhn is directed at a tape applicator and methods of applying tape to a surface. In Kuhn, tape is fed from a tape roller holder 102 to a cutter 122. The cutter 122 includes blades 126. After cutting, the tape is fed to platen 154 and application roller 152.

In response to the rejection, Applicants herein amend claim 1 to clarify a difference between Kuhn and the claimed embodiment. In Kuhn, a cut is necessarily formed on the adhesive sheet over the entire width of the tape (a direction perpendicular to the feeding direction of the tape). On the other hand, the claimed embodiment includes a blade which forms a cut in a closed loop shape which is smaller than the entire width of the film. Please see, for example, Figures 2 and 4-6. Specifically, Applicants herein amend claim 1 to recite "a pre-cutting device having a first member located on a film side of the strip material and a second member located on a base sheet side of the strip material, the first member having a blade which

forms a closed loop cut on the film, said closed loop having a width less than a width of said film, thereby forming a pre-cut portion of said film.”

In Kuhn, a removable portion 98 is formed in each adhesive sheet between a stick starting edge and a stick ending edge. In order to remove this removable portion 98, Kuhn necessarily requires a remover 140. On the other hand, in the claimed embodiment, film portions to be removed can be continuously wound with the base sheet S by the winding roller 33. In view of this, the claimed embodiment can eliminate the need for a remover 140 as shown in Kuhn. This avoids an increase in the size of the device, a rise in costs for manufacturing the device, and complication of the device control. Furthermore, this allows the elimination of the removal of removable portions 98, and the elimination of a need to clean adhesive agent adhered to the surface of the remover 140, allowing for a reduced burden for operators. In addition, because it is not needed to stop the operation of the device to remove a removable portion 98, the lowering of the adhesive sheet sticking capacity over time can be reduced. Furthermore, the reduction of product quality due to the removing of the removable portions 98 can be eliminated. Therefore, high quality products can be stably supplied. Therefore, for at least the above reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of cited art does not disclose or suggest the embodiment of amended claim 1. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicants' Response to Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being anticipated by Kuhn in view of Murphy (U.S. Patent No. 5,730,816).

It is the position of the Office Action that Kuhn discloses the embodiment as claimed, with the exception of teaching that the tension control means includes a dancer roller. The Office Action relies upon Murphy to provide this teaching.

Applicants herein cancel claim 2. Thus, this rejection is moot.

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being anticipated by Kuhn in view of Wesen (U.S. Patent No. 3,860,473).

It is the position of the Office Action that Kuhn discloses the embodiment as claimed, with the exception of teaching that the pre-cutting means includes a die receiving plate and a die roller having a cutter blade formed on a roller. The Office Action relies upon Wesen to provide this teaching.

Applicants herein cancel claim 5. Thus, this rejection is moot.

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being anticipated by Kuhn in view of Beaudry (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0044481).

It is the position of the Office Action that Kuhn discloses the embodiment as claimed, with the exception of teaching that the pre-cutting means includes a movable roller and a die plate having a circular blade formed thereon. The Office Action relies upon Beaudry to provide this teaching.

Applicants herein cancel claim 6. Thus, this rejection is moot.

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being anticipated by Kuhn in view of Yamamoto (U.S. Patent No. 6,767,426).

It is the position of the Office Action that Kuhn discloses the embodiment as claimed, with the exception of teaching that a die receiving plate and a blade disposed on a rotation member which is rotatable by a motor. The Office Action relies upon Yamamoto to provide this teaching.

Applicants herein cancel claim 7. Thus, this rejection is moot.

New Claims

Applicants herein add new claims 8-15, which recite the structure of the pre-cutting device in greater detail. These claims are supported at least by Figures 4-6. No new matter has been added. Favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

For at least the foregoing reasons, the claimed invention distinguishes over the cited art and defines patentable subject matter. Favorable reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner deems that any further action by applicants would be desirable to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone applicants' undersigned attorney.

Application No. 10/574,847
Art Unit: 1791

Amendment under 37 C.F.R. 1.114
Attorney Docket No. 062289

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,
WESTERMAN, HATTORI, DANIELS & ADRIAN, LLP
/RYAN B. CHIRNOMAS/

Ryan B. Chirnomas
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 56,527
Telephone: (202) 822-1100
Facsimile: (202) 822-1111

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